

Please cancel ~~claims 1 through 14~~ and add the following clean version of new claims 15 through 21:

IN THE CLAIMS:

15. (New) A method for protecting a coating of paint on an article, including an automobile body, from scratches, the method comprising coating onto the paint a protective composition which is a water-washable combination of acrylic resins and a caustic, wherein the composition forms a water-washable coating and is removed from the article by washing with water, the method further comprising removing the water-washable coating by rinsing with water.

16. (New) A coating composition for protecting a coating of paint, the composition comprising:

from about 5.5 to about 12 weight percent of at least one film-forming acrylic resin;

from about 5 to about 12 weight percent of a combination acrylic resin of a viscosity controller and a plasticizer;

from about 1 to about 3 weight percent of a caustic selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, and mixtures thereof so that the composition has a pH of from about 7.5 to about 9.0; and

from about 73 to about 88.5 weight percent water, all weight percents being based on the total weight of the composition,

whereby the resultant composition has an acid number between about 60 and about 110, and the combination of the resins with the caustic results in a water-washable coating composition that is removed by rinsing with water.

17. (New) The coating composition of claim 16, wherein said viscosity controller is present in an amount which controls the viscosity of the composition in the range of from about 100 to about 500 centipoise.

18. (New) The coating composition of claim 16, further comprising:  
from about 2 to about 5 weight percent of plasticizer for the acrylic resins;  
from about 0.25 to about 1 weight percent of a surface wetting agent;  
a viscosity controller in an amount which controls the viscosity of the  
composition in the range of from about 100 to about 500 centipoise; and  
from about 67 to about 86.5 weight percent water, all weight percents being  
based on the total weight of the composition,  
whereby the resultant composition has an acid number between about 60  
and about 110, and the combination of the resins with the caustic results in a water-washable  
coating composition that is removed by rinsing with water.

19. (New) A coating composition for protecting a coating of paint, the  
composition comprising:  
from about 4 to about 8 weight percent of a first film-forming acrylic resin  
having an average molecular weight of from about 200,000 to about 260,000;  
from about 5 to about 7 weight percent of a second acrylic resin having a  
weight average molecular weight of from about 2,000 to about 10,000;  
from about 1 to about 3 weight percent of a caustic selected from the group  
consisting of sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, and mixtures thereof so that the composition  
has a pH of from about 7.5 to about 9.0;  
a viscosity controller in an amount which controls the viscosity of the  
composition in the range of from about 100 to about 500 centipoise; and  
from about 82 to about 90 weight percent water, all weight percents being  
based on the total weight of the composition,  
whereby the resultant composition has an acid number between about 60  
and about 110, and the combination of the resins with the caustic results in a water-washable  
coating composition that is removed by rinsing with water.

20. (New) A coating composition for temporarily protecting a coating of paint on an article, including an automobile body, the composition comprising:

from about 1.5 to about 4 weight percent of a first film-forming acrylic resin having a weight average molecular weight of from about 235,000 to about 285,000;

from about 1 to about 3 weight percent of a caustic selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, and mixtures thereof; and

from about 93 to about 97.5 weight percent water, all weight percents being based on the total weight of the composition,

whereby the resultant composition has an acid number between about 60 and about 110, and the combination of the resins with the caustic results in a water-washable coating composition that is removed by rinsing with water.

21. (New) A coating composition for temporarily protecting a coating of paint on an article, including an automobile body, the composition comprising:

from about 4 to about 8 weight percent of a first film-forming acrylic resin having a weight average molecular weight of from about 175,000 to about 225,000;

from about 1 to about 3 weight percent of a caustic selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, and the mixtures thereof; and

from about 89 to about 95 weight percent water, all weight percents being based on the total weight of the composition,

whereby the resultant composition has an acid number between about 60 and about 110, and the combination of the resins with the caustic results in a water-washable coating composition that is removed by rinsing with water.